



Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

P.O. Box 51, Rockport, MA 01966

www.millbrookmeadow.org

*Charmaine Blanchard
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer
Aileen Morrissey
Frederick H. Tarr III*

*Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair
Barbara Sparks
Stephanie Woolf*

Minutes of Meeting Wednesday, April 8th, 2015 Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library

7:00 p.m. Chairman **Sam Coulbourn** called the meeting to order. Members present: **Barbara Sparks, Shannon Mason, Marcia Lombardo, Stephanie Woolf, Charmaine Blanchard** and **Ted Tarr**. Also present were **Gunilla Caulfield**, Trustee of the Lura Hall Phillips Trust; **Eric Hutchins** and **Laura Hallowell**, Advisors to the RMMC; and visitor **Tom Mikus** of 73 Marmion Way. **Aileen Morrissey** was absent.

1. Public input. Charmaine reported that the railing between King Street and the dropoff into the Meadow near the Stoneworkers' Stairway was destroyed during all the snowfalls but DPW has just repaired it. She also thanked Sam for submitting a letter to the Gloucester Daily Times, which was printed in the paper last week.

2. Committee Business.

a. Treasurer's Report. Marcia announced that the MMC treasury was unchanged. Marcia explained to Laura that the payment to the Garden Club Knotweed account had been delayed but was now paid.

b. Minutes of March 11, 2015. Marcia called for change of treasury amount from \$2802.12 to \$2806.12. Members approved minutes as amended.

c. New MMC Member Candidate Search. Charmaine suggested that Ron Alpert and Betsy Eck might be interested. Eric suggested that at our public meeting April 15 we ask for interested persons to volunteer for MMC, Conservancy or Advisors.

3. Update status of Millbrook Meadow Restoration.

a. Lura Hall Phillips Trust. Sam reported that the last money in the trust [**\$19,500?**] has been turned over to the Town. He expressed the thanks of the Committee and the Conservancy to Gunilla for her splendid stewardship of the Lura Hall Phillips Trust over 21 years, her steadfast protection of Lura's savings, and her work with the Committee to provide those funds, some \$182,500, for initiating the present restoration.

b. Status of Phase 3 Work by MMI. Barbara reported that she and others had presented our restoration status to the Conservation Committee on April 1, and she, Sam and Laura had made a formal presentation on the Master Plan to the Rockport Garden Club on April 6. She noted that at the ConComm meeting one member had suggested that we consider planting a large sycamore in the Meadow in place of a willow. Barbara has passed this suggestion on to MMI.

Tests by MMI's subcontractor in the Meadow have been reported to be satisfactory to date, with no evidence of contamination.

c. Willows. Barbara reported that the two old willows had been satisfactorily removed on April 2. The Atlantic Tree Company took the trees down and the huge stumps will be ground out at a later date. She asked DPW to save one viable piece of the smaller trunk, cut into about 18-inch slices. The larger stump was so rotten there was nothing to preserve. The contractor reported that when they cut into branches of both trees they exploded with rotten, powdery wood. In the view of arborists, these trees were definitely a hazard, and it was past time to take them down.

d. Stone wall. Barbara observed removal of the large willow has exposed a beautiful stone wall and Jason Williams, MMI, has suggested that it would be good to place a sign on the wall describing the artisanship preserved there. The wall is quite high, and was constructed without modern equipment.

4. Public Meeting Wednesday, April 15. Barbara asked that this item on the agenda moved forward to be discussed at this time; members agreed.

a. No AV. She reported that the audio-visual system and the sound amplification system in the Brenner Friends' Room were both inoperative and asked if it might be better for us to make and display poster-size photographs in lieu of slides. Shannon will look into this. Laura suggested that we should be able to borrow a projector from the Council on Aging.

b. Welcome Table. Ted and Laura volunteered to man the welcome table at the entrance to the room, and ask visitors to sign in. Shannon said she would provide tee-shirts for sale, and brochures, etc.

c. Publicity. Shannon asked members to post flyers at key places around town to advertise the meeting. Charmaine volunteered to contact the GDT for a calendar listing.

d. Agenda. Barbara reviewed the Agenda for the meeting.

5. Board of Selectmen's Meeting. MMC (Barbara and Sam) will brief the Board of Selectmen on the Master Plan and progress of the restoration project at their meeting on Tuesday, April 14th at about 8:30 p.m. Barbara noted that the selectmen would like a verbal report, with no PowerPoint. They have allocated 20 minutes for report and questions and answers.

6. The Regulatory Approach. Discussion returned to restoration. Eric stressed that it was *very* important that MMI and MMC pay close attention to the MEPA filing. He said this document will be about two inches thick and we had better study it before it is filed. Eric stressed that this is very important to the success of the project, and we cannot assume that all will flow along with the contractor without our paying very close attention. He also stressed that he was uncomfortable about the wording in the MMI contract for their approach to the regulatory portion of this project. Eric related his considerable experience as a regulator and working with regulatory agencies, and emphasized that he thought this was all being taken too lightly. He asked that the Liaison Team headed by Barbara underline this to the contractor. Eric noted that he saw scant evidence of this aspect in the MMI project timeline. Sam said that we had expressed Eric's concern to Jason Williams of MMI, but we would do so again. [Note: Barbara did this on April 9th both by phone and by sending an email from Eric that outlined his questions and concerns.]

7. Update on Procedures for Invasives. Laura reported that she had assisted DPW with soliciting quotes on a program for early intervention with invasive plant life in the Meadow and around the Pond. Bids received ranged from \$9000 to \$51,000, but she said she was confident that we could find a contractor who could scale down their bid to meet our budget of \$3000. The low-bid contractor, Polatin Ecological of Turner's Falls, MA, is one she has worked with in the past.

8. Plan for Spring Cleanup April 25th. Shannon reported that she would be out of town during this event and asked for a volunteer to pick up the trash bags in preparation. Stephanie volunteered to pick up the bags from Gerri Falco at the Conservation office. This event will take place from 9 to 11 a.m. **[Note: Charmaine said something here, but I did not record it...]**

9. Kiosks. Members discussed procurement of an information kiosk for the Beach Street entrance to the Meadow. Ted related that Gloucester High School wood shop students had built some kiosks for Dogtown, to replace ones destroyed by vandals. Stephanie volunteered to ask if Rockport High School was capable and interested in such a project for the Meadow.

10. Meadow and Pond Use Request Policy and Procedure. Charmaine reported that her queries of the Town Administrator had not yet been answered. She has asked about fees for use of the Meadow by organized groups, and about bylaws.

11. Fundraising Sub-Committee. Our donation total stands at \$29,626.00 at ECCF, including a generous donation by Ted tonight. Shannon confirmed that the fees ECCF charges are off-set by the investment income generated by ECCF's management of the account. A decision will be made in June by the Bruce J. Anderson Fund regarding our grant application.

12. Community Outreach. Barbara reported that Aileen had dropped out of this effort because of personal matters. She asked for help arranging for visits with other town organizations. The schedule to date:

- a. **Board of Selectmen Tuesday, April 14th.** Barbara and Sam will present.
- b. **Special Public Meeting Wednesday, April 15th at Brenner Friends' Room.**
- c. **Economic Development Committee TBD.**
- d. **Historic District Commission TBD.**
- e. **Rotary June 25th.** [Obtained April 11th] Sam will arrange.
- f. **Finance Committee TBD.**
- g. **Motif No. 1 Day Saturday, May 16th all day.** Shannon is in charge. She said booth rent had risen to \$40. She moved to allocate that amount, Stephanie seconded. All voted to approve.
- h. **Open Space Committee—**Ted will inquire.
- i. **Next Public Meeting,** in summer. Eric stressed that this meeting in mid-summer was important before the contractor reaches the 50 per cent design stage. Barbara suggested that we might make that the open hearing held by the Conservation Commission, since MMI will be here for that.

Laura has prepared a spreadsheet to keep track of all these dates.

13. Print Collateral Review. Shannon brought up fact that the Town website is at best inadequate, and we soon will run up against the stops by having so much information on site that no more can be accommodated, so we will have to arrange for older information to be withdrawn.

14. Ad for Garden Club Tour Book. Shannon stated that we have reserved a half-page ad for the RGC Tour Book and moved that we pay. Stephanie seconded. All voted to approve expenditure.

15. New Business. Sam said that Council on Aging has asked to hold the annual **Rubber Duck Race** in Mill Brook at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 30th. All voted to recommend approval by Selectmen.

Page | 4

16. World Fish Migration Day. Eric stated that he will schedule a demonstration on trapping and counting elvers and eels at the same time as the Rubber Duck Race on May 30th. He reported that he has installed the trap in the Pond, and his interns have been helping. He has removed the screen from the eel ladder and cleaned up the chute.

17. Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 at Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library.

18. Adjourn 8:43 p.m.

Approved:

Samuel W. Coulbourn

**Copy to: Town Administrator; Director of Public Works; Conservancy Board and Advisors;
Conservation Agent; DPW Commissioners**